SWAFIELD AND BRADFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Swafield and Bradfield Parish Council – Data Retention Policy

Adopted: November 2025

Review Date: November 2027

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1. Introduction

Swafield and Bradfield Parish Council ("the Council") produces and receives a wide range of documents in carrying out its functions. This policy sets out how long different types of documents are retained and how they are securely disposed of when no longer needed.

The Council is committed to retaining documents only for as long as necessary to meet legal, financial, administrative, and historical requirements, in accordance with the **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**.

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2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- The Council keeps only those documents it needs for its business purposes and statutory obligations.
- Records are disposed of in a consistent and controlled manner.
- Information of historical value is preserved appropriately.

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3. Responsibilities

The **Parish Clerk** is responsible for:

- Implementing and monitoring this policy.
- Maintaining the records inventory.
- Ensuring the timely and secure disposal or archiving of documents.

All councillors and staff must ensure records they hold on behalf of the Council are managed in accordance with this policy.

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4. Document Retention Schedule

The following table outlines how long key categories of documents are to be retained before destruction or archiving.

Category	Document Type	Retention Period	Action
Governance	Minutes (signed)	Permanent	Transfer to archive
	Agendas	–	Destroy after Minutes have been signed
	Reports and supporting papers	–	Destroy after Minutes have been agreed
	Declarations of acceptance of office	Term of office + 1 year	Destroy
	Register of members' interests	–	Details held by NNDC
Finance and Administration	Annual accounts and returns	Permanent	Archive

	Bank statements, paying-in books, cheques	6 years	Destroy
	Invoices and receipts	6 years	Destroy
	VAT records	6 years	Destroy
	Payroll and pension records	6 years	Destroy
	Insurance policies	While valid + 6 years	Destroy
	Employment Indemnity Schedule	Permanent	Archive
	Insurance claims	6 years after settlement	Destroy
Employment	Employee records	Duration of employment + 6 years	Destroy
	Job applications (unsuccessful)	6 months	Destroy
	Training and appraisal records	Duration of employment + 2 years	Destroy
Property and Assets	Title deeds, leases, agreements	Permanent	Archive
	Asset register	Life of asset + 7 years	Destroy
	Maintenance records	Life of asset + 2 years	Destroy
Correspondence and Communications	Routine correspondence and emails	—	Destroy after being actioned
	Complaints (resolved)	3 years	Destroy
Planning	Planning consultation responses	—	Destroy - originals held by NNDC

Grants and Projects	Grant applications (successful)	Duration of project + 6 years	Destroy
	Grant applications (unsuccessful)	1 year	Destroy
	Project documentation	Duration of project + 6 years	Destroy

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5. Storage and Security

- Paper records are to be stored in locked cabinets or secure storage areas.
- Electronic records must be stored in password-protected folders or secure cloud systems.
- Backups should be maintained and encrypted where possible.
- Access to records is limited to authorised personnel only.

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6. Disposal and Archiving

When the retention period expires, documents must be:

- **Securely destroyed** — paper documents shredded or incinerated, and electronic files permanently deleted.
- **Archived** — records of historical or legal value (such as minutes or deeds) should be transferred to the **Norfolk Record Office** or another approved archive.

A **Disposal Log** will be maintained by the Clerk, recording what documents were destroyed or archived, when, and by whom.

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7. Review

This policy and retention schedule will be reviewed **bi-annually** or earlier if required by changes in legislation or Council operations.

Approved by: Swafield and Bradfield Parish Council
Date of Adoption: 11th November 2025

Next Review Due: November 2027

Signed:

Chairperson: _____

Clerk: _____